(b) and (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) Several Schemes in the Fields of health, housing, education and recreation are already being implemented by the Government for the welfare of beedi workers in the country.

**STATEMENT**

*Statement showing estimated number of beedi workers in the country.*

| State | No. of beedi workers |
|---|---|
| Uttar Pradesh | 4,50,000 |
| Karnataka | 3,55,000 |
| Kerala | 1,36,000 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 6,25,000 |
| Tamilnadu | 6,21,000 |
| Rajasthan | 1,00,000 |
| Gujarat | 50,000 |
| Orissa | 1,52,000 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 6,50,000 |
| Bihar | 3,92,000 |
| Maharashtra | 2,56,000 |
| West bengal | 4,50,000 |
| Assam | 8,000 |
| Tripura | 5,000 |
| Total | 42,50,000 |

**Effect on Steel Industry due to Hike in Petroleum**

2508. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether hike in petroleum prices has affected the steel industry and likely to affect on steel producers;

(b) if so, whether any assessment has been made by the Ministry in this regard;

(c) whether the diesel price rise would result in increase cost of raw material and thereby make the finished products costlier;

(d) whether in view of this steel prices would go up;

(e) whether 85-90 per cent of the entire transport in the steel industry is handled through roads which would cost more; and

(f) if so, to what extent steel products will be affected due to this rise?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The hike in the prices of petroleum products will affect the steel products.

(b) It has been assessed that due to hike in petroleum prices, the direct impact on public sector steel plants during 1996-97 will be about Rs. 71 crores.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) At present the Government does not exercise any control over pricing of steel. The steel prices may however, go up to increase in prices of petroleum prices.

(e) and (f). Pricing of steel products will be affected to some extent. The impact on cost of production in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant for instance in likely to be about Rs.35/- per tonne of finished steel and Rs.5/- per tonne of pig iron.

*[Translation]*

**Misbehaviour with Lady Passengers**

2509. KUAMRI UMA BHARATI :
SHRI RAM NAIK :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the incidence of misbehaviour with lady passengers on board on Air India flight by the crew members have come to light recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, the out come thereof;

(e) the action taken against the guilty employees; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to prevent recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (f). No, Sir. However, an employee travelling on leave, allegedly misbehaved with a lady passenger on board. The employees has been placed under suspension and a disciplinary enquiry has been initiated against him.

**Non Electronic Media**

2510. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the measures taken or proposed to be taken by his Ministry to strengthen the non-electronic media;

(b) whether the Government propose to expand and strengthen the field publicity organisation in the context of the coming into force of the Panchayati Raj and decentralisation of planning and implementation;